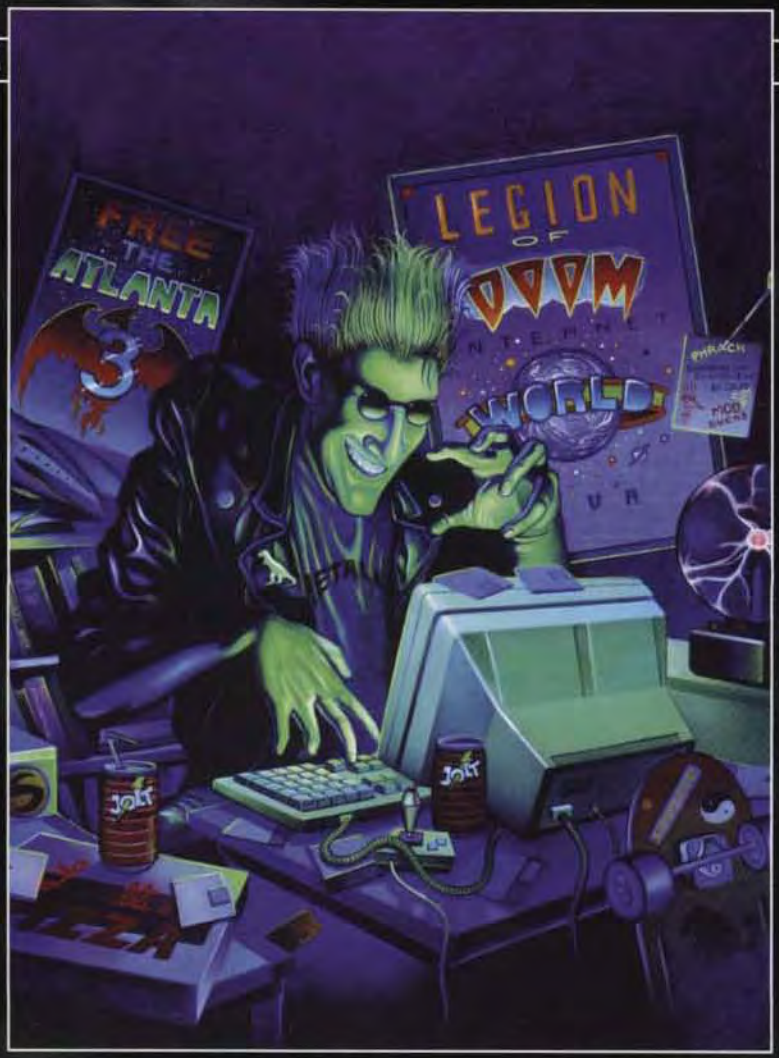
HACKER®

THE COMPUTER CRIME CARD GAME

DELUXE EDITION



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

HACKER

THE COMPUTER CRIME CARD GAME

BY STEVE JACKSON ®

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Cover by Jeffrey K. Starling
Hacker Logo by John Dismukes
Card Graphics by Heather Oliver

Constructive Criticism: Loyd Blankenship

Invidious developmental suggestions: David Searle and Kerry Havas

Playtesters: Doug Barnes, Drew Bittner, Jim Boedecker, Christopher Burke, James Cokelet, Jill Cunningham, Kerry Havas, Juliette Hertel, Mike Hurst, Jeff Koke, John Kono, David May, Chris McCubbin, Lynette McCubbin, Tim McGaughy, Therel Moore, Pat Pesek, A. B. Peterson, Laird Popkin, Marshall Rodriguez, Arthur Samuels, Ryland B. Sanders, David Searle, John Simpson, Spike, Monica Stephens, Rey Titus, Franchesca Vecchio, Chris Vermeers, Christian Wagner, Todd Woods, Dustin Wright, Steve Zieger.

Additional art by Jason Caton.

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Very special thanks to William Gibson for showing us how to look at the Net.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1990, Steve Jackson Games was raided by the U.S. Secret Service during a "hacker hunt" that went disastrously out of control. We lost several computers, modems and other equipment. Worse, we lost the manuscripts to several uncompleted games, most notably ***GURPS Cyberpunk***, which a Secret Service agent the next day called "a handbook for computer crime." The company had to lay off half its staff, and narrowly avoided bankruptcy.

And starting the day after the raid, gamers asked us *"When are you going to make a game about it?"*

So we did. And it won an Origins Award, and the supplement (included in this set) won another. Not too shabby.

Eventually, we got most of our property back, though some of it was damaged or destroyed. The Secret Service admitted that we'd never even been a target of their investigation. With the help of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (**www.eff.org**), we sued them in Federal court and won. Even though the government attorneys complained that we had profited from the raid by releasing ***Hacker***! (For the whole story, visit **www.sjgames.com/SS/**.)

COMPONENTS

The ***Hacker*** box contains this rulebook, a ziplock bag, and:

51 Regular System Cards. Light blue, with cable icons at edges. Six of these are hubs, with a dark blue spiral-star pattern overlaid on the card.

10 Indial System Cards. Dark blue, with cable icons at edges and a round white phone symbol in the center.

4 Outdial System Cards. Light blue, with cable icons at edges and a square black phone symbol in the center.

95 Special Cards. White, with black and blue text.

5 Blanks, of various types.

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Hack apart the Console Sheet to yield:

6 Console Units – large rectangles to be folded and set up.

2 Expansion Chassis units, which allow players to add an extra slot to their system, for a total of four slots.

27 System Upgrades (large keystone-shaped markers). There are also three blank upgrades so you can replace lost ones or invent your own.

13 Bust markers (handcuffs)

1 Net Ninja marker (throwing star)

12 Virus Flags – 6 each for the Mona Lisa and Beelzebub virus. See p. 11.

15 Virtual Bridge markers (see p. 13).

Punch out the counter sheets to yield the following chips:

Account chips: 21 (hex-shaped) for each of the 6 colors: outline (normal account) on front, solid (root) on back.

The Worm: 21 (hex). These are the ones with the wiggly purple "W."

Security +1: 12 (hex)

Security +2: 6 (hex)

Security +3: 6 (hex)

Regular ICE: 21 (hex)

Black ICE (skull on back): 12 (hex). 3 of these are +1, 3 are +2.

Never Cleans House: 3 (square)

Secret Indial chips: 6 (square) for each of the 6 colors.

Back Door chips: 3 (square) for each of the 6 colors.

Known Indial chips: 9 (square)

Crashed chips: 18 (square)

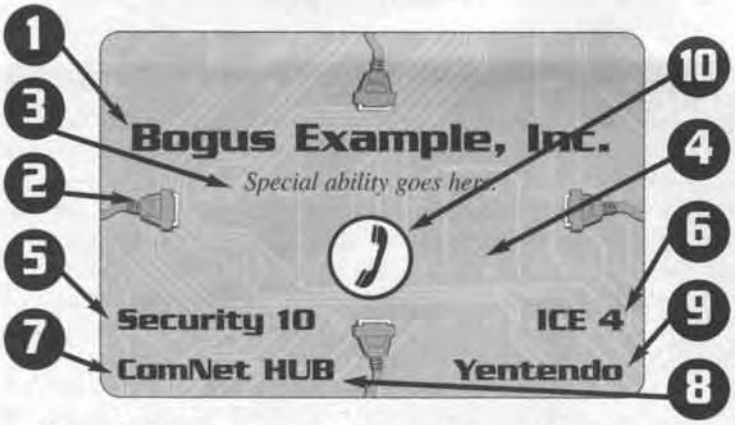


Figure 1: Completely bogus example of a system card.

The Cards

The basic card in ***Hacker*** is the system card. This represents a single computer system somewhere in the Matrix (any resemblance to real organizations is purely satirical in nature).

Each system card has the following features:

1. System name.

2. Links – These are the cables at the edges of the cards, representing possible connections to other systems.

3. Special notes or abilities – Some cards give special abilities to anyone who has root access there. You cannot use a system's special abilities unless you can trace a *path* of accounts to let you reach that system – just having an account there is not enough.

4. Blank space – Place account chips in this area when you get access to a system – don't cover up the Security, ICE, etc.

5. Security – The higher this number, the more secure the system is and the harder it is to hack. See p. 5.

6. ICE – Not every system has ICE (Intrusion Countermeasure Electronics). It represents improved, dangerous security which can reach out and *zap* someone. See p. 5.

7. Net, if any. There are three subnets to which certain systems belong: MilNet, BizNet and ComNet. If a system belongs to a net, it will be shown at the lower left.

8. Hub – This shows that the system is a hub of one of the three sub-nets. It counts as directly connected to all members of its net, no matter where they are. Hubs have a large spiral design on the card (not shown on this example). See p. 6.

9. System type, if any. Many computer systems belong to one of a few standard types. If you know something about one, you know about all of them. There are five standard types: HAL, Moon, Vermin, Bacchus and Yentendo. If a system is a standard type, this will be shown at the lower right.

10. Indial or outdial – If the system can be contacted by a regular phone, it will have a white phone icon in the middle. If it can phone other systems, it will have a black phone icon in the middle.

Special Cards

The special cards are white with black and blue text. A special card never hurts the player who draws it. Cards like **Raid** are to be used against rivals, and will have instructions at the bottom explaining their use.

Some special cards may be used only at certain times, as specified on the cards themselves. If a card doesn't specify otherwise, it may be used at any time. A player never *has* to use a special card.

When you get a special card, you may use it immediately or keep it face-down for later use. Cards which give you a continuing benefit (like **Allies**, for instance) are kept face-up in front of you when used. (Unless such a card states otherwise, it is lost only if you are actually arrested, or *busted*.) Cards which give a one-time benefit go to the discard pile after use.

You don't have to show anyone your face-down specials, but you can choose to do so. Face-down specials have no effect until they are turned face-up.

Special cards may be traded at any time, or given away as part of a deal.

You cannot play a special card to help someone else, but you can give them a special card when they need it and *they* can play it if they choose.

The Chips

Account Chip. These are the hex-shaped chips with colored symbols. Each player gets a different color. When you successfully hack a system, place a chip there to show you have an account (don't cover the text on the card). If you have *regular* access, put the account chip with the hollow symbol up. For *root* access, turn the chip so the solid symbol is up.

Secret Indial Chip. This square chip in one of the six player colors has a picture of a phone. Placed on a system, it shows that the player knows a secret phone number (see *Reaching a System*, p. 5) and can use this system as an indial.

Known Indial Chip. This square white chip has a picture of a phone. Placed on a system, it shows that all players have access to an indial there. The system is now the same as a regular indial.

Back Door Chip. This square chip has a key symbol. It shows that a player has back-door access to the system – e.g., permanent root access.

ICE Chip. One of these goes on every system with an ICE rating. Some of them have skulls on the back . . . *black* ICE.

"Never Cleans House" Chip. Indicates a really lazy sysadmin.

Crash Chip. This chip with a nuclear blast symbol is placed on a system to show that it is crashed.

Player Markers

Net Ninja Marker. This large square marker with a throwing star symbol goes in front of the player who has the most systems at any given time. See p. 6.

Bust Marker. Each time a player is busted, place one of these handcuff markers in front of him. Too many busts, and you're out of the game.

Consoles and System Upgrades

Each player gets one of the *consoles* – the folded card representing a computer system. Each console has three slots which can hold *system upgrades* (the small keystone-shaped markers):

Modem – the yellow slot. Each player starts with a regular modem, printed on his console, which gives no special abilities. Upgrades can give the player better modems, which give bonuses to every attempt to hack.

System unit – the blue slot. Each player starts with a Plain Clone, printed on his console, which allows two hacks per turn. Upgrades can give the player better system units, which allow more hacks per turn.

Expansion slot – the red slot. This slot starts out empty. There are several different kinds of expansion. Some give more hacks, some give hacking bonuses, and some give other abilities.

Each slot may hold only one upgrade at a time. Each slot may hold only an upgrade of its own color. Some upgrades require the player to turn in a previous, lesser upgrade – for instance, you cannot get an Amoeba 3000 system unit unless you already have a Hackintosh, and you must return the Hackintosh to the pile of available upgrades when you take the Amoeba

A player may not keep or save any system upgrades except in his console, and must always let other players see what's in his console. Upgrades may not be traded between players.

There are a limited number of upgrades. If the one you want isn't available, you'll have to wait until one becomes available – either when someone trades it in, or when someone gets raided and loses his equipment.

The Expansion Chassis

A normal system has only three slots: modem, system, and expansion. An "expansion chassis," which costs one upgrade, adds a second expansion slot, which will let you have two red upgrades at the same time. Actually buying something to fill this slot would cost another upgrade. But then you could have – for instance – both a RAM card and a Sequencer.

You may not buy an expansion chassis until all three of your original slots are full. The tab on the expansion chassis fits into your expansion slot, behind the upgrade that is already there, and adds room for a new red upgrade. Note that only two expansion chassis are available!

If you are raided or busted, and lose your upgrades, you also lose the expansion chassis.

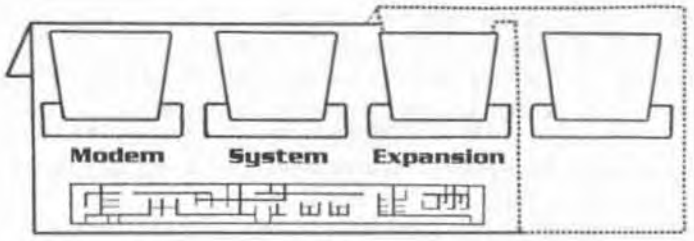


Figure 2: Expansion chassis location.

Military Upgrades

There are three black-bordered "Military Upgrades." You cannot get a military upgrade with a regular upgrade card – you need a special card that specifies a Military Upgrade. They are:

BANSHEE modem (yellow) – +3 to all hacks.
TEMPEST computer (blue) – 5 hacks per turn.
MILITARY ICEBREAKER (red) – you ignore *all* ICE totally.

These represent government equipment, purchased on the black market. If you're raided while you have a military upgrade in your console, you *will* be busted unless you play a **Dummy Equipment**, **Self-Destruct** or **Whoops** card.

No trade-in is required for a military upgrade. If you already have an upgrade in the appropriate slot, you must discard it to make room; if you have any modem at all, you must discard it to install the Banshee. But if you have no modem at all, you can still get a Banshee! The same is true for the other two upgrades.

Starting The Game

For New Players: If you've never played before, we suggest you start with the *Short Game* rules (p. 9).

You'll need a large table to play ***Hacker***. Separate the Indial cards (dark blue face) and the regular system cards and Outdials (light blue face) from the rest of the deck. Now take some of these, randomly, as follows:

2-player game: 5 regular systems, 3 indials
3-player game: 6 regular systems, 3 indials
4-player game: 9 regular systems, 3 indials
5-player game: 11 regular systems, 4 indials
6-player game: 14 regular systems, 4 indials

If you are using the *Outdial* rules (p. 10), replace one regular system with an outdial, or two if you have 4 or more players.

Deal these system cards evenly among the players.

Now, starting with the player to the dealer's left, each player in turn places a card in the center of the table, until all have been placed. This forms the "net." Each card must link to another card already placed, forming a single net, unless this is absolutely impossible. In that case, set the new card to the side, where it forms the core of a second net! If a second net is started, players can place new cards into either net, as they wish.

The cables on the edges of the cards are the "links." For two systems to link, they must be adjacent (see diagram) and *links on each card must touch.* If a card has no link on a side or end, no system may be adjacent to it on that side or end! System cards may *not* touch unless they are actually linked. See the diagram below.

It doesn't matter whether cards are right-side-up, upside-down, or sideways, as long as adjacent cards always link.

It is illegal to place a card improperly. If this happens during the initial phase of building the net, just move the offending card. If it happens later, during play, the player who misplaced the card must move it to a legal position, and lose the rest of his turn. The card isn't placed until the player takes his hand off it. When he takes his hand off, it stays there.

When the initial cards have been placed, shuffle all remaining cards back into the deck. Now regular play can begin – again, with the player to the dealer's left.

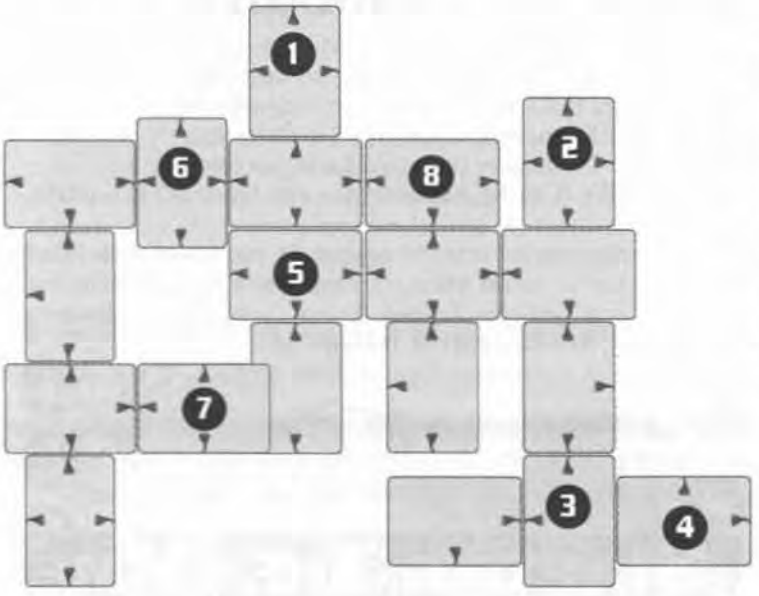


Figure 3: A card layout with instructive errors.

All connections shown are legal except for the following:.

Card 1 is illegally placed because it has no link touching the card below it. Turn it around and it will be legal.

Card 2 is illegal because the card below it has no link touching it. No card can be placed where Card 2 is – put it somewhere else.

(Note that Card 2 is *not* connected to Card 8, even though they're close. They're not touching.)

Cards 3 and 4 have *no* links touching . . . somebody was asleep when Card 4 was placed. No card can be placed where Card 4 is. Move it!

Card 5 has two problems. In the first place, it has no link to connect it to the card directly above it. In the second place, it is touching Card 6 – just barely, but it's touching. *A placement like this is never legal,* because cards do not have links on their corners. (Okay . . . a Virtual Bridge, p. 13, could make it all right.) Card 5 would be legal if turned at right angles, so the link which is now on its right side touches the card above it. The card below it would have to move down, too.

Card 7 is overlapping another card. Not legal, ever. Move it.

Turn Phases

Each player's turn has the following phases:

1 and 2. Roll for crashed systems and housecleaning. (Early in the game, no systems have been crashed, and no systems will be so infested with hackers that they trigger housecleaning.)

3. Draw a card. After drawing a card (and playing it into the Net, if it's a system card), you may take a free system upgrade and *skip* the rest of your turn (no hacking, phreaking or narking). Or you may continue . . .

4. Hack – try to get access to systems.

5. Phreak – give your friends a chance to get access to systems where you've already got an account. You can skip this if you don't want to help anybody.

6. Nark – try to get your rivals thrown off of systems! You can skip this if you don't want to antagonize anybody.

It is now the next player's turn.

The following sections will describe each turn phase in more detail.

1. Roll for Crashed Systems

A player's first action each turn is to roll one die for each system that is currently crashed. On a 1, it becomes un-crashed (remove the crash marker). When it comes up, it automatically undergoes housecleaning. See *Crashing*, p. 8, to find out how the system got crashed in the first place.

2. Housecleaning

Housecleaning is what happens when a system administrator realizes that he has hackers on his system. He'll try to shut them out. He may or may not succeed.

A player's second action each turn is to see whether any system administrators try to "clean house." Housecleaning can also be triggered by other events.

Triggering Housecleaning

Housecleaning can happen automatically whenever there are too many hackers on a system at the beginning of a turn. Roll one die for each such system:

If there are 4 hackers on the system (or 3, in a 3-player game) the sysadmin cleans house on a roll of 1.

If there are 5 hackers on a system, it cleans house on a 1 or 2.

If there are 6 hackers on a system, it cleans house on a 1, 2 or 3!

Housecleaning happens automatically if someone hits ICE on a system. The hacker who hits the ICE is off automatically. If someone phreaked him onto the system, they're off, too. Other players must survive a normal housecleaning effort.

Nark, Nark – Who's There?

A hacker can *deliberately* cause a housecleaning by narking on a system during the Nark phase of his turn. But it doesn't always work, and it has risks. See *Narking*, p. 7.

Housecleaning by a Hacker

A hacker can spend one of his hacks to "clean house" *himself* on a system where he has root access, to throw his rivals off. See p. 7.

Results of Housecleaning

When a system administrator cleans house, each hacker on the system must roll one die if he had regular access, two dice if he had root. On a result of 4 or less, that hacker loses access.

Thus, regular access is very vulnerable, root access much less vulnerable. But even root access can be lost to bad luck.

3. Draw A Card

Take one card from the pile. If it is a system card, you must play it into the Net immediately, following the placement rules above. (If you try to hack into that system on this same turn, you'll get a +1 bonus.) It's legal to consult with the other players before placing the new system, and even to make deals about it.

If you draw a special card, follow the directions on the card. Some can be played immediately, and some can't. You never *have* to use a special card. If you can't play it now (or don't want to), keep it upside down in front of you.

If you draw a special card that applies only to an optional rule that's not in play, you may discard it and draw a replacement, or trade it for a Virtual Bridge (p. 13).

If you draw the last card, reshuffle the discard deck.

Free System Upgrade – Skipping A Turn

Any player can choose to skip a turn whenever he likes. He's taking a few weeks away from hacking, to earn a few bucks for hardware.

After you roll for un-crashing and housecleaning, and draw your card, you can choose to skip the rest of your turn and take an automatic system upgrade. Pick any System Upgrade marker from those currently available (but remember, some require trade-ins). Your turn is now over.

A player who doesn't take a free system upgrade can now proceed to the rest of his turn: hacking, phreaking and narking.

4. Hacking

A "hack" is an attempt to break into a computer and give yourself an illicit account. Each hack represents many hours of persistent work, trying to defeat your target's security.

The basic hack is for *access* – to get an account on the system. If you have regular access, you can hack for improved (root) access.

If you have root access on a system, you can hack to throw other hackers out.

Number of Hacks

At the beginning of the game, each player has a very basic PC, or Plain Clone. This allows two hacks per turn. As the game progresses, hackers may get better equipment (see *System Upgrades*, below) or special cards which allow them extra hacks, or make their hacks better.

You are not required to use all your hacks, or to hack at all, but you'll almost always want to. You may not give your hacks to another player.

If something happens *during* your turn to increase the number of hacks you get, you get the new, higher number on that turn. If something happens during your turn to *decrease* the number of hacks you get, you get the new, lower number – but if you had already hacked more times than that, you just stop hacking immediately with no further penalty.

Reaching a System

To hack a system, you must be able to trace a path to it from your home computer and modem. If your target is an indial, you can reach it automatically. Otherwise, you must be able to trace a path of accounts from an indial to your target.

A dark blue system card is a "indial." *Anyone* can call in and try to hack it. No other system may be hacked until you have an account on an indial.

However, all systems have secret indial numbers. If you learn one of these numbers, place one of your Indial Chips on the system. You can then treat that system as an indial. You can also tell the number to others. If *everyone* learns the number, place a **Known Indial** chip on the system. It's now the same as any other indial

Repeated Hacks

If a hack attempt fails, you may try the same system again on the same turn at no penalty – provided that you have hacks remaining.

How To Hack

Important Notice To Secret Service! This Is Only A Game!
These Are Not Real Hacking Instructions!
You Cannot Hack Into Real Computers By Rolling Little Dice!

Indicate the system you are attacking and roll 2 dice. You are trying to roll the system's "Security" number or *higher*. If you succeed, you have gained access to the system. (Note that you can earn bonuses to this roll – see below).

If you make your roll, you have *regular* access to the system (you have learned a password). Put an Account Chip on the system with the "hollow" symbol showing.

Success by 4 or more gets you *root* access (you have the system administrator's password!). Put an Account Chip on the system with the solid symbol up. With root access, you can do almost anything you want with the system, as long as you're not noticed.

Any time you roll a natural 12 on a hack attempt, it means that you cracked the target on the first try. It was so quick that it doesn't count against your total number of hack attempts for the turn! (You don't get root unless you ALSO succeeded by 4 or more.)

Avoiding the ICE

Some high-security systems have ICE (Intrusion Countermeasures Electronics). When you try to hack into a system with ICE, your adjusted die-roll must *beat* that system's ICE number. Otherwise, not only did your hacking attempt fail, but you've been detected and you're in trouble.

Furthermore, when you attack a system with ICE, a natural 2 always fails regardless of any bonuses you have. The only thing that can prevent this is the "Icebreaker" system upgrade. This reduces all ICE numbers by 3 and protects you from the dread "automatic failure on 2."

Hitting ICE blows you off the system that you're attacking *and* reveals where you're calling from. If you are reaching your target through another system, you immediately lose your account on *that* system, too. Remove your account chip. This does not end your turn; if you have more hacks left, you can use them.

If you are hacking directly into an indial and you hit ICE, you're in trouble. You are automatically detected and raided – see *Raids*, below. You lose all your system upgrades. You must roll a 7 or better, or play a special card, to avoid a bust when you're caught hacking an indial.

Whenever anyone hits ICE on a system, there will be an automatic housecleaning there – see *Housecleaning*, p. 4.

Example: Mentor Microcode has Security of 10 and ICE of 4. If your adjusted roll is 4 or less, you hit the ICE. And if your roll is a natural 2, *regardless of bonuses,* the ICE got you – unless you have an Icebreaker.

If your adjusted roll is 10 or better, you have access.

If your adjusted roll is 14 or better (10+4), you have *root*!

Yes, it's hard to roll 14 on two dice. You need bonuses . . .

Hacking Non-Indials

Light blue system cards are not indials – they have no publicly accessible incoming phone lines. The only way to reach these cards is through an indial *which you have already penetrated.* This connection may be direct (the target system is next to your penetrated indial). Or it may be indirect, through a whole chain of systems. But each system must be penetrated (that is, must have your account chip on it), and the path must lead back to an indial.

If you can trace a path of penetrated systems starting with an indial, you can hack your chosen target just as though it was an indial.

Direct Connections

Most systems will be connected to indials through a chain of links (dedicated land lines), shown by the cables on the cards. All these links are two-way. If Greedcomm is next to Able Cable, you can hack from either system to the other one.

Hub Connections



Each of the three *net types* (see below) in the game has two "hub systems," shown by the large spiral-star symbol. No matter where it is in the net, a hub connects to all other systems *of its net type.*

This is a one-way connection. For instance, the MilNet hubs are NORAD and the Pentagon. If you have access to NORAD, you can hack from there to any other MilNet system – no matter where it is – but not vice-versa. Naturally, hubs aren't easy to get into in the first place . . .

What? No Path?

What if you have an account on a system, but can't trace a path from it to an indial? This can happen because of system crashes or changes in the net . . . or because you lost access to an intermediate computer. If you can't reach the system, your account there remains intact, but you cannot use it (or any bonuses or special abilities it gives you) until you can once again trace a chain of systems you have penetrated, all the way back to an indial.

Bonuses to Hack

Certain things will make it easier for you to hack a new system. Some of these are special cards. Others depend on what systems you *already* have access to. In general, the more systems you're in, the easier it will be to crack the next one.

Some of these bonuses can be shared with other players – see *Trading Favors,* p. 7.

Discovery Bonus

If you just drew and played the system on your current turn – if you're the one who added it to the Net – you get a +1 bonus. In finding the system, you learned something about it that will be useful if you strike immediately. This bonus is lost after the turn you play it, and can't be shared.

Net Ninja



If one player has active accounts on more systems than anybody else, he's the Net Ninja, the Master Hacker, the Serious Dude. Put the Net Ninja counter in front of him. The Net Ninja gets a +1 to every hacking attempt he makes, but only as long as he has more systems than any other player. (If you can't trace a path to a system, it *doesn't count.*)

Why the bonus? When you're the Net Ninja, everyone else calls you to hang out, and they *tell you things* . . .

The Net Ninja bonus becomes active the instant you are the hacker with the most systems – even in the middle of your turn. You lose it again the instant that someone ties or beats your total.

This bonus can't be shared with other players.

If players are *tied* for the most systems, nobody is the Ninja.

Same System Type

Some types of computer are so common that, if you know how to deal with one, you know something about them all. There are five types of computer in this game: HAL, Moon, Vermin, Yentendo, and Bacchus. System type is shown at the lower right of the system card. If there is no system type there, the system is of some weird and obscure make and you can't get a type bonus to attack it.

If you have current root access on any system of the same type, add 1 to your hacking roll. Multiple systems don't give any extra bonus; the most you can get for System Type is +1.

Same Net Type

There are three sub-networks of connected systems in this game: MilNet (military), ComNet (communications) and BizNet (business). Net membership is shown at the lower left of the system card. If there is no net membership shown, the system does not belong to any special network.

If you have current root access on any system on the same network, add 1 to your hacking roll. Multiple systems don't give any extra bonus; the most you can get for Net Type is +1.

Adjacent Root Access

If you have current root access on an adjacent system (either directly linked, or a net hub), you get a +1 to any hacking attempt, because you can read messages going to your target system. This lets you learn protocols, grab passwords, and so on. Root access to two adjacent systems would give a +2, and so on. This bonus can be shared. (But if two players both have access on the *same* adjacent system, they can't both give you a bonus!)

A net hub is adjacent to all systems in its net – so, for instance, root on NORAD, a MilNet hub, gives +1 to hack the Coast Guard. But the reverse is not true. A hacker cannot trace a path from the Coast Guard back to NORAD (unless they happen to be physically adjacent). So root on the Coast Guard would give no adjacency bonus to hack NORAD.

Same Root Access

If *another* player has current root access on the *same* system you're trying to hack, he can give you a +2 bonus if he chooses to help you – see below.

This bonus *includes* bonuses for net type and system type – you can't get it *and* get bonuses for net or system. Essentially, if your buddy already has root, he can hand you all the bonuses on a silver platter.

Example: You are trying to hack a MilNet system. You have root on another MilNet system, for a +1 bonus. But DoomBunny, who already has root on your target, offers to help you. This gives you a +2, but it replaces your own +1 for MilNet, rather than adding to it.

Promotion: Improving Your Access

When you already have regular access to a system, you can hack to *improve* your access. If you succeed, you'll get root access. Roll normally, with any hacking bonuses you are entitled to (or can get as favors). You can do this on your own turn, as a hack. Or you can do it on someone else's turn, if they are in the system and let you phreak.

If your roll beats the system's Security number by 3 or more, you get root. In effect, you get a +1 bonus because you're already in the system. You don't get this bonus if someone else already has root on the system and is giving you that +2 bonus.

However, there's always the chance that this "promotion" will backfire. On a natural 2, regardless of bonuses, you are noticed and you lose *all* access to the system. (If the system has ICE, of course, worse things will happen than that. See *Avoiding the ICE*, p. 5)

Hacking to Houseclean

A hacker who has root access may "clean house" himself, eliminating his rivals' accounts. This takes time, and counts as a hack for the hacker who does it, but he runs no risk of detection or of losing his own account! He can also choose to leave some accounts untouched, if he wishes to.

When a hacker cleans house, he may specify which of his fellow hackers he wants to eliminate. Those with root access roll 2 dice, as usual, while those with normal access roll just one. But they lose access on a roll of 5 or less, rather than 4. (The hacker is not necessarily more skilled than the system administrator, but he knows what he's looking for, and is not distracted by the real world.)

5. Phreaking

When a player is through hacking, he may "phreak" – that is, make phone calls. Of course, hackers don't *pay* for their calls, which is why the phone company loves them so much! You use these calls to share information with your fellow hackers.

Each phreak gives one of your fellow hackers a chance to hack onto a system *where you already have access*. He must be able to reach that system normally – that is, it must be an indial, or he must be in an adjacent system.

Roll his phreak (= free hack) normally. If he doesn't have an account there, he can try to get one. If you have root but he doesn't, you can give him a chance to promote himself.

You may give *each* of your fellow hackers one free hack (but no more) during this phase. You don't have to phreak *anybody* if you don't want to.

All bonuses that the other hacker has – or that others give him – count normally.

When you phreak someone in, you may limit his access. He cannot get root (no matter how good his roll) unless *you* have root. And if you have root, you can still choose to say, "I'm only telling you enough for you to get regular access." Of course, if someone gets regular access, he can try to promote himself later.

If the hacker you are helping triggers ICE, *you* will also be shut out of the system, losing your access – though you don't suffer any of the other bad effects of the ICE. (You dropped your connections and covered your tracks rather than risk anything worse.) The system administrator then cleans house automatically, and other hackers in the system must roll normally to keep their accounts.

6. Narking

This is optional; you don't have to nark. When you nark, you contact the administrator of a computer system and offer evidence that he has (gasp!) hackers on his system. If he believes you, he'll initiate a housecleaning (see *Housecleaning*, p. 4).

You must be have current access to the system, or to an adjacent one, in order to get enough information to nark believably.

When you nark, roll 2 dice. You must roll the system's Security number or *less* in order to be believed. If you fail this roll, nothing at all happens. If Security is 12 or more, you'll always be believed.

But narking has its risks. If you roll a 2, then the administrator decided *you* were a threat, and he tracked you down! You are automatically raided – see p. 8. He still cleans house, of course.

You may only nark on a given system once per turn, but you can nark on as many *different* systems as you want to. But it gets riskier each time. On your second nark *in the same turn*, you'll be raided on a roll of 4 or less. On your third nark, you're raided on a 6 or less, and so on.

When you finish narking, your turn is over.

Trading Favors

Trading favors is very important in hackerdom.

If someone else has root access that would give you a bonus, he can give you that bonus (for that attempt only) if he wants to. *Example*: You're trying to hack a HAL system. You don't have root on any HALs right now, but one of the other players, The Professor, does. If you can talk The Professor into saying he'll help you, you can have the +1 bonus for System Type.

Maybe he'll help you out of the goodness of his heart. Maybe you can promise to do *him* a favor later. Maybe you'll have to offer him a special card.

You can use favors from several people in the same hack. In the example above, maybe your target is on MilNet, and Godzilla has root access on a MilNet machine. There's another +1. And maybe Mr. Slippery has root on an adjacent system. There's another +1. But only if they'll cooperate! It costs them nothing to help you, but you have to talk them into it. Social engineering at its finest . . .

You can *not* share the bonuses from system upgrades or special cards – those work only for the owner. All you can share is the *information* which you gain by having root on the right systems.

Note: Accepting a favor can give you a virus, if you are using the *Virus* rules. See p. 11.

Enforcement of Promises

If you promise to do something for someone on your *current* turn, you must keep the promise. Realistically, they probably wouldn't give you the information unless you had started to keep your end of the deal. For instance, suppose Godzilla agrees to give you a bonus to hack if you let her phreak into the same system at the end of your turn. You have to do exactly what you promised.

But if you say, "Help me now and I'll do such-and-so for you later," you don't have to keep your promise. But remember: memories are long, and payback can be murder.

Forced Favors

Each "Raid" card has an alternate use: a forced favor. If you don't want to use it to get a fellow hacker raided, you can use it to *demand* a favor from any other player. The definition of this type of favor is very precise. If it doesn't fit this definition, you can't demand it as a forced favor!

To use a forced favor, you must have a **Raid** card. Discard it, point at one of your rivals, and say, "You're doing me a favor."

(1) If it is your turn, your victim must give you every bonus he can in your next attempt to hack, whatever it is – even if success will let you win.

(2) If it is *his* turn, he must let you phreak on the system of your choice, *and* give you every bonus that he can.

(3) In either case, if your victim knows a secret indial on your target system, he must share it with you.

Crashing

If you have root access to a system, you may crash it on the "phreak" phase of your turn. Just say you're crashing it and put a nuke marker on it. Nothing can be done on a crashed system, and none of its special abilities can be used. Also, no paths can be traced through it. And it doesn't count for victory or Net Ninja.

However, administrators will work *hard* to catch a crasher. If you crash a system, roll 2 dice, with no bonuses except those given by an Icebreaker. If you roll the ICE number or less, you're tracked and raided (unless you have a special card that saves you). If there's no ICE, though, there's no risk.

When a system is crashed, nobody (including the crasher) loses their account – yet – but they can't *use* it. A system does not count for system type or network bonuses while it's crashed, nor can its special abilities be used.

At the beginning of every player's turn, roll 1 die for *each* crashed system. On a 1, the system comes back up, suffering an automatic *housecleaning* (see p. 4).

Raids

A careless or unlucky hacker can suffer a *raid* by police or federal agents. Certain special cards can make a raid worse – or protect against its consequences.

Result of a Raid

When a hacker is raided, representatives of Law and Order will ask him politely to find a new hobby, and confiscate all his equipment just to drive the message home. He loses all his System Upgrades. (Tomorrow he can go to the corner store and buy another Plain Clone.) If he had just hacked a system, he loses his account there. If it was his turn, he loses the rest of his turn.

And finally, he must roll to see if he's *busted*.

Raid Cards and Defenses

Most raids will be triggered by **Raid** cards, played by other hackers. A **Raid** card can be played only after someone makes a successful hack. It can be played on *anyone* – not just the person who made the hack! However, if the target is the person who made the hack, he immediately loses his account on the system he was hacking. (If he had just crashed it, it's still crashed.)

Certain special cards may be played at this point, by any player, to make the raid *worse*. The victim of the raid should call for such cards. When his opponents have played all that they are going to play, the victim may now play any raid defenses he has in his hand. Some defenses "trump" any possible raid. Others are worthless against certain raids and the victim will know not to bother playing them. Offensive cards *cannot* be added after the defender plays whatever defenses he can, nor can a second raid be played until after another successful hack.

After all offensive and defensive cards have been played, the raid may be an automatic success (the victim is busted) or an automatic failure. If it's not automatic, roll two dice to see if the raid turns into a *bust*. The number required to escape a bust depends on the type of raid, as shown on the card – from 6 for Local Police to 9 for the FBI. If you roll the required number or more, you lost your equipment, and your turn is over, but nothing else happens – you get off with a warning. Otherwise, you're busted – see below.

Nark Backfire

A hacker who triggered a housecleaning, by warning a system administrator that he had hacker problems, will sometimes be raided himself – see p. 7. When this happens, a roll of 7 or more is required to avoid a bust, unless defensive cards are played.

ICE Raid

A hacker who triggers a system's ICE will always be raided if he was dialing it directly, rather than through another system.

A hacker who triggers ICE when he *crashes* the system will be tracked down and raided even if he came through another system.

Whenever the raid is ICE-related, a roll of 7 or more is required to avoid a bust, unless defensive cards are played.

BUSTED!

If you fail your roll when you're raided (or if a special card keeps you from rolling), you are *busted*. Did you really think you could keep this stuff up forever?

Results of a Bust

Regular Game: You've already lost your equipment. Now you lose all your special cards, whether face-up or face-down. You *don't* lose any of your accounts (though if you were raided after a hack, you've already been thrown off the system you were hacking).

Short Game: You lost no equipment to the original raid. When you're really busted, they just take away your modem.

States' Evidence

If you have a **Raid** card of your own when you're busted, you may turn like a crazed weasel on your betrayer, immediately playing it on the hacker who played the **Raid** card on YOU. He has a -2 penalty to his roll to avoid being busted. Your own bust still counts.

Three Strikes And You're Out

Each time a hacker is busted, place a handcuff marker in front of him. When someone is busted for the third time, he is out of the game.

Sorry, dude – your hacking days are over. Where you're going, there aren't any computers, and they dial the phone ***for*** *you.*

If someone is eliminated or drops out of the game, all his special cards go into the discard pile. All his system upgrades go back to the pool. All of his account chips are removed from the net.

WINNING THE GAME

You win by gaining active access to 12 systems, declaring yourself a Master Hacker, and retiring while you still can. For a different game length, vary this total. 8 systems gives a short game, 16 gives a long game, 20 gives an all-night marathon.

Victories can be shared. When any player reaches 12 systems, play out his current turn; everyone who has 12 at the *end* of that player's turn shams the victory, with honors going to those with the most systems and/or fewest busts. (If something happens so that *nobody* has 12 at the end of the turn, continue play normally.)

Access does not count for victory unless you can still reach the account. If you have an account on a system you can't reach because the path is broken, it doesn't count for victory. This can also lead to shared victories; when a crashed system comes up, it may reestablish paths to systems so that two or more hackers match 12 at once.

The fewer times you have been busted, the better the win is. Winning with no busts qualifies you for a Silicon Valley startup.

STRATEGY

Building the Net: The initial net layout can have a big effect on the game. In general, don't put the indials too close together. When possible, begin by placing a few low-security systems next to indials. Otherwise, you'll have a hard time getting started.

Territory: Just because you can share a system with other hackers doesn't mean you always should! The more hackers are on a system, the likelier it is to get housecleaned, and the likelier somebody is to crash it just when you start to depend on it. If you can establish a private territory somewhere on the net – someplace that nobody else can reach – you're much better off. Hidden indials are especially good for this.

When you draw a system card – especially a good one – consider placing it where you can easily get to it. If you can't use it yourself, you can play it when nobody can get it at all, or you can make a deal to place it where it will help someone else.

Keep a Low Profile: If you look too dangerous, your rivals are less likely to help you, and more likely to send raids your way. It's dangerous to spend too much time as Net Ninja, or to have the best console in the country, until you're ready to go for the win.

Don't Be a Loner: If you cooperate too much, of course, you can give the game away. But if you never help anybody, nobody will help you, and you'll fall behind. If some players cooperate and some don't, the ones who cooperate have a better chance.

For More Vicious Play . . .

If ***Hacker*** isn't cutthroat enough for you, here are a few hints for making the game even more dog-eat-dog . . .

Fewer Indials. Start with fewer indials in the basic setup, and remove a couple of them from the deck. This will force the players to compete desperately for accounts on the remaining indials.

No Third Chance. A player is eliminated after his second bust, not his third. (This can be a good idea if you're only playing to 8 systems, anyway.)

Less Phreaking. Each hacker may grant only one phreak attempt per turn – not one per player per turn.

Easier Housecleaning. Change the "hacker housecleaning" rule to say that a hacker can spend a hack to automatically eliminate rivals who have regular access, while those with root must roll 7 or better to survive.

HACKER LITE: THE SHORT GAME



For a much shorter game (usually an hour or less), don't use any of the optional rules below. Remove the following cards from the deck – **Whoops, Self-Destruct, The Worm,** and **Disinfectant** – and the **Beelzebub** and **Mona Lisa** viruses.

Also, make the following rule changes:

Raids: In the Short Game, a hacker does not lose his System Upgrades when he's raided. If it was his turn, he loses the rest of his turn. If he had just hacked a system, he loses his account on that system. He must roll to see if he's busted. That's all.

Busts: In the Short Game, you lose *only your modem* when you're busted. (Not realistic . . .). If you have any special cards, you lose one – your choice – either face up or face down.

The winner is the first player to get 8 accounts.

In the Short Game, it's best to concentrate on building up your own position quickly, because there's not nearly as much you can do to tear your rivals down.

Optional Rules

These optional rules add complexity and realism (well, pseudo-realism, anyway). They definitely make the game longer. Use any or all of them.

Black Ice makes hacking more dangerous, and requires players to work through twisted paths, like fictional hackers (and some real ones).

Viruses can infect your system and make it harder to hack. They also allow for more diplomacy and backstabbing, since you can trick your rivals into getting infected.

The Worm provides players with an artificially intelligent competitor on the Net!

Virtual Bridges give you more control over the configuration of the Net.

Improving Security lets hackers make things harder (and therefore slower) for their rivals.

Multiple Accounts is a *very* optional rule. It is realistic – in the real world you can have lots of accounts on the same system – and adds more possibilities for strategy, but it lengthens the game.

BLACK ICE

ICE is covered on p. 5. Regular ICE can cost you your account on the system you're hacking from, but it can't actually *catch* you unless you call an indial. Black ICE is worse. Black ICE can *hunt you down*.

The ICE Chips

This set has 33 chips which say ICE on one side. Most are just the same on the back, and represent regular ICE. The others have a skull, representing Black ICE! And a few of the Black ICE chips have +1 and +2 on them – meaning that not only is the ICE black, but it's worse than anybody thought!

At the beginning of the game, turn all the ICE chips so the skulls are hidden, mix them up, and place one on each card with ICE. As the game progresses, whenever a new system with ICE is added to the net, put a randomly chosen ICE chip on it.

Learning About ICE

You don't know what kind of ICE a system has until you look at the chip. If you get root on the system, you can look, but you cannot show anyone else – just look at the chip and put it back. Of course, you can tell your fellow hackers what you saw. You can lie, too.

The other way to learn about the ICE is to hit it. If someone hits ICE on a system with an unrevealed chip, turn it over immediately. If it's regular ICE, remove it. But if it's Black ICE, leave the chip. Everyone now knows that it's black . . . and the hacker who hit it must suffer the consequences.

Hitting Black ICE

When a hacker hits Black ICE, his hacking attempt automatically fails. He loses his account on that system (if he had one). And he loses his account on the attacking system. So far, this is like regular ICE. But it gets worse.

The player to the hacker's right takes the part of the Black ICE, rolling the dice for its trace attempts. From the system which launched the failed hack, it now tries to trace the next system back. This requires a die roll equal to the Black ICE system's Security, or less. If the chip has a +1 or +2, that number is added to the system's Security, for all purposes, for the rest of the game.

Example: Suppose a system has Black ICE and security of 9. Its first trace is automatic, but its second one requires a roll of 9 or less. If this succeeds, the hacker loses his account on that system, and the system automatically housecleans after the trace is over (see below). From there, the Black ICE tries again – this time rolling at a -1, so it needs an 8 or less.

And so on, at a further -1 each time, until the ICE misses a roll (and the hacker escapes) or tracks him to the indial he used (and he gets raided). If he gets raided, the effects are exactly the same as if he had hit ICE while hacking directly into an indial – see p. 6.

The best way to protect against Black ICE is to route your call through *many* other systems – and, if possible, to use an outdial, as described below.

Black ICE Housecleaning

After a Black ICE incident is resolved, every system through which the Black ICE pursued its target will automatically houseclean. The housecleanings occur in the same order that the systems were entered. However, if the ICE trail crosses any system more than once, that system will only houseclean once.

OUTDIALS

An outdial is a system that can call other systems. Specifically, it can call an indial! In ***Hacker***, an outdial has one important use: covering your trail to make it harder for ICE to get you.

Outdials are shown by a black square in the middle of the card, with a phone icon and the word OUT.

When you start a game, add one outdial to the initial cards that make up the net – or two if there are four or more players. These cards replace regular systems in the initial setup. (If you are not using this rule, an outdial counts as a regular system.)

A hacker with an account on an outdial can use it to hack into any indial. This is much safer than calling an indial directly, especially if it has ICE! If you hit ICE while hacking the indial, the ICE kicks you off the outdial, but doesn't cause a raid – unless, of course, it is Black ICE and follows you home.

And you can trace a hacking path through an indial, to an outdial, to *another* indial where you already have an account, as shown below:

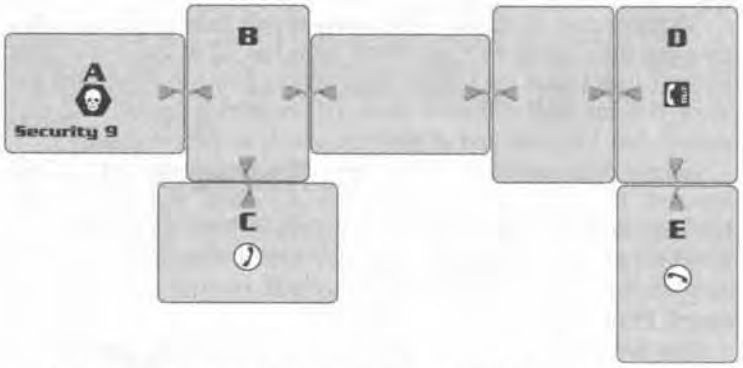


Figure 4: Tracing a path through an outdial.

When Black ICE tries to trace a call, it rolls at a -3 to trace a path to an outdial.

In the illustration above, suppose our hacker hits Black ICE in system A. It automatically tracks the hacker to B. With security of 9, it needs a 9 or less to get to C, and makes it. Now, C is an indial, but it's not the *first* indial the hacker used. He called it from

an outdial, D. So instead of an 8 to trace the call to system D, the Black Ice needs a 5.

But suppose it makes that roll. It still has a -1 to trace every further link. To get from System D to System E, where the hacker first entered the Net, the Black ICE needs a 4 or less! Our hacker may lose a lot of accounts, but he probably won't get a knock on his door . . . this time.

This makes it necessary for a hacker to describe the exact path that he is using to reach his chosen target. If a hacker forgets to define his path, and hits ICE, he is assumed to have called by the *shortest possible path* between the target and some indial where he has an account. So watch it!

Generally, when calling Black ICE, you want to define the *longest* possible path you can manage from your target to an indial. A path can go through each system only once *unless you have multiple accounts there* (see p. 12). If you have two accounts on Ed's Budget Outdial, for instance, you could route an attack path through there twice.



VIRUSES

A virus is a program which "infects" other programs. When you have a virus in your system, your efficiency will go down until you get rid of it. There are two different viruses in this game: Beelzebub and Mona Lisa.

When a virus enters play, determine its effects by rolling on the Virus Results Table. You will have to make a note of these effects. When the virus is finally wiped out, put the **Virus** card in the discard pile. If it comes back up, it will have mutated, and you can determine new effects for it.

Virus Results Table – roll 2 dice

2: -3 to all hacks!
3, 4: -2 to all hacks.
5, 6: -1 to all hacks *and roll again* for a further effect. Ignore this result if it comes up again.
7: -1 to all hacks.
8: Nasty virus: +1 to chance to spread. Roll again for symptoms. Ignore this result if it comes up again.
9, 10: -1 hack per turn.
11: -1 hack per turn *and* all hacks at -1.
12: -2 hacks per turn.

No virus can ever reduce you to *zero* hacks per turn.

Starting A Virus

The person who draws a **Virus** card does not get the virus. Instead, he keeps the card until another player accepts a favor from him. At that time, the player with the **Virus** card can hand over an infection along with the favor. *No promise not to infect someone is ever binding!*

The person who receives the **Virus** card is automatically infected unless he has a **Disinfectant** card. In that case, he can keep the **Virus** for later use *and* place the **Disinfectant** in front of him, thus gaining immunity to that virus. The best of both worlds . . .

To indicate that the victim is infected, put the appropriate Virus Flag on his console. Remove the flag if he gets rid of the virus.

Using the Virus Flags

There are six flags for each of the two kinds of virus. To use the flags, cut them out and fold them in half on the dotted line.

When a system is infected, slide the virus flag through one of the slots on top of your console, so the indicator can be seen from both sides. That warns everyone that you are virus-infected.

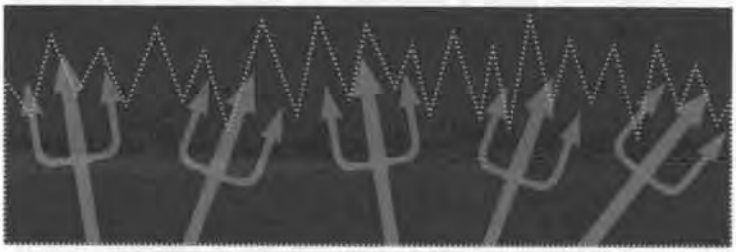
Spreading A Virus

Once a virus is in play, it can be spread to other players in two ways. The infected player has no choice whether to spread the virus or not. The creator, unless he happens to have a **Disinfectant** card, is as vulnerable as anybody else, though if he catches it he will have an easier time curing himself . . . see below.

First, at the end of the infected player's turn, roll once for *each player* who shares any system with them. The virus spreads to the new victim on a roll of 1 or 2. (Some viruses rolled up from the random table are especially bad, and spread on a 1, 2 or 3.) Roll only once for each player, no matter how many systems they may share with the infected hacker. *Yes, it is legal to give up an account rather than risk the virus roll!*

Second, the virus can spread to anyone who accepts a favor (see p. 7) from an infected player. Each time someone accepts his help, no matter how much or how little, roll a die as above.

Everyone who is infected must put the appropriate flag on his console.



Getting Rid of a Virus

Disinfectant: If you have the **Disinfectant** card, you can clean one virus off your system and keep it off. Put the **Disinfectant** card in front of your console (make a note which virus it's for). It gives immunity only against one virus. If you play the card and declare that you're immune to Mona Lisa, then Mona Lisa can never harm you while you have the card (even if the virus mutates and comes back from the discard pile). But unless you get another **Disinfectant** card, Beelzebub can still get you.

Check Every Disk: Spending a hack gives you a 1 in 6 chance of wiping out the virus. You can try as many times as you like, rolling a die each time. On a 6, you have totally eliminated it from your system. *You can catch it again, though.* (Note that if you were the creator of that particular virus, you can get rid of it on a roll of 4, 5 or 6.)

The Nuclear Option: If you get rid of your whole system – e.g., discard all your upgrades – you automatically get rid of the virus. (Few virus programs can survive the ceremonial defenestration of the hard disk where they reside.) If you do this at the beginning of your turn, you may still take a normal turn.

A Present For The Feds: If the Feds take your system, *they* have the virus, and *you* don't. If a virus-infected system is confiscated, *all* brands of Law Enforcement get a permanent -1 on all their rolls to bust someone, starting immediately. If they get both Mona Lisa and Beelzebub, this becomes a -2.

The Worm

A worm is a program which copies itself from system to system. Unlike a virus, which hides on disks and infects home computers, a worm propagates among the mainframes which make up the Net. That means that a worm will never come to live on your home system . . . but it may make it harder for you to hack, by clogging up the networks where you want to play, and drawing unwanted attention to the systems.

Creating the Worm



A player can release the worm onto the Net by playing the **Worm** card during his turn; this counts as a hack. This may be done offensively (because of the hacking bonus it gives); defensively (to block another player); or hackerly (to see what happens).

The Worm may be started on any system where the hacker has current access, or any adjacent system. That system is automatically infected; place a Worm chip there.

The first thing to do is to determine how effective this incarnation of the Worm is. The Worm gets a "hack bonus" equal to all the bonuses that the creating player has at that moment *from system upgrades and special cards.* For instance, if a hacker had an **Allies** card (+1), a RAM upgrade (+1) and a Screamer modem (+2), then his Worm would have a permanent +4 bonus to all its hacks. It keeps this same bonus as long as it exists, regardless of what happens to its creator.

Once the bonus is determined, the Worm then immediately rolls to infect each adjacent system, as described below.

Effects of the Worm

To show that the Worm is on a system, place a Worm chip there. Any system containing a Worm chip suffers the following effects:

(1) It does a special housecleaning every turn – even if it is a system that normally never housecleans. This is aimed at the Worm, but there's a chance that it will catch hackers, too. Roll 1 die for each wormy system. On a 1, the worm is removed from that system. On a 6, the sysadmin notices that he has hackers and does a regular housecleaning immediately (this is in addition to any other regular housecleaning that he might perform). Other results have no effect.

(2) Except for the player who created the Worm, no one can use an account on a wormy system to give bonuses for other attacks.

(3) Net paths can be traced *to* a wormy system, but not *through* it. Thus, a hacker can try an operation on a wormy system where he has an account – or try to hack into it if he does *not* have an account – but he cannot go "past" it. The worm blocks further access.

(4) It may spread the Worm to neighboring systems – see below.

How the Worm Propagates

Right *after* the housecleaning phase, each wormy system will attempt to infect *each* of its neighbors. The Worm can spread over any connection: a regular connection or a virtual bridge. It can spread from a net hub to all members of that net, but not from a net member to the hub.

The worm infects its neighbors by making a regular hacking roll against each one in turn. The player whose turn it is rolls for the worm. Roll 2 dice and add the worm's bonus (see above), trying to roll the target system's Security number or higher. For instance, if the worm has a bonus of +4, then a roll of 6 or better would infect a target with a Security of 10.

On a successful roll, the worm immediately duplicates itself in the target system . . . place a worm chip on that system. It does not spread again from that system until the next turn.

The Worm does not "double up" in a system. Either the system is infected, or it's not, but it cannot be multiply infected. However, a system which gets rid of the Worm can be reinfected at any time. And a system which is next to two wormy systems has two chances, every turn, to be infected!

Killing the Worm

There are four ways to get the Worm out of any individual system:

(1) As described above, there is a 1 in 6 chance each turn that the system's own efforts will remove the Worm.

(2) Any hacker can spend a hack to attack the Worm in any system where he has an account. This also gives a 1 in 6 chance to remove it.

(3) By spending *all* his hacks for the turn, a hacker can *automatically* remove the Worm from any system where he has an account.

(4) By playing the **Disinfectant** card, a hacker can eliminate the Worm from the whole net. The card cannot already be "in use" as virus protection, and must be given up.

Multiple Accounts

A hacker may have more than one account on the same system. Each account is represented by a separate account chip.

If your best existing account on the system is a regular account, getting another account takes a regular hack, at a +2 bonus for the information you already know by being on the system.

If your best existing account is *root*, you can *automatically* give yourself a regular account. Make a hack roll anyway, and on a good enough roll you get root. Otherwise, you still get regular access in the new account – unless you rolled a natural 2 on a system with ICE, in which case you hit the ICE.

If you have both root and regular access on the same system, spending one hack will automatically promote any one regular account to root, with no die roll required and no risk of hitting ICE.

The main purpose of extra accounts is simply to make it easier to survive housecleaning. Of course, extra accounts also invite housecleaning. When you check for housecleaning at the beginning of a turn, look at how many *accounts* are on the system, not how many *players*.

Multiple accounts can also be useful, especially on indials and outdials, because they let you trace a call path more than once through the same system. See *Black ICE* and *Outdials* on p. 10. An extra account may also be given away as part of a deal (see below).

Extra accounts on the same system do not count for victory conditions or give any other kind of bonus to hack or to help others hack. Extra accounts on a system with special abilities (like NCIC) do not let the hacker use those abilities twice.

Giving Away Accounts

If a hacker has more than one account on a system, he can give one away to another hacker. He must do this on his own turn, but it does not count as a hack; it's a free action. Replace the account chip with one of the new color.

Virtual Bridges

A Virtual Bridge is a counter 1/2" by 1" which can be used to connect two systems in the Net. It shows a double-ended cable. To use it, place it between two cards which are already in the Net, or between an existing system and a new one. It must touch or overlap both cards. These two systems are now considered connected.

Once played, a bridge cannot be removed. *Exception*: A bridge must have two ends. If one of the systems it connects is removed from play, or moved away from the other system, the bridge vanishes.

While it is physically possible to place a Virtual Bridge so that it touches three or more systems, this is not legal. A bridge so placed does not count at all, and should be removed.

If a bridge won't physically cross the gap between two correctly-placed systems, it cannot link them. Make sure that cards are properly positioned, with their links touching, in order to determine this. You may not line up two bridges to connect distant systems, or connect a bridge to an existing bridge.

Getting a Virtual Bridge

You may get a Virtual Bridge counter, at any time during your turn, by discarding any special card from your hand. You may keep it until you need it, or trade it or give it away as part of a deal. If all the Virtual Bridge counters are in play or owned by players, you can't get one.

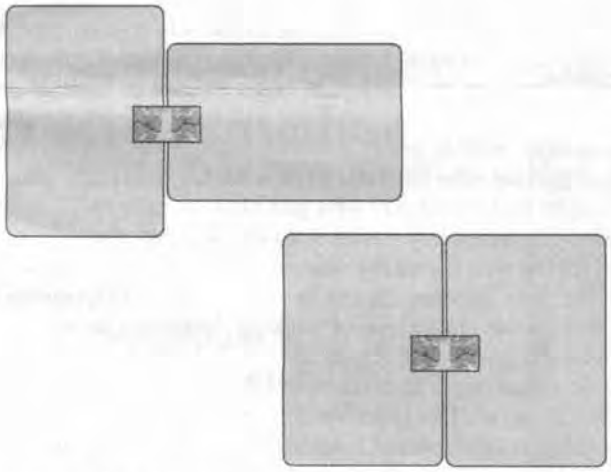


Figure 5: Adding a new system with a bridge.

Bridges To New Systems

If you place a new system in the Net, you may add one or more Virtual Bridges at the same time. One end of each Bridge must touch the new system, and the other must touch a system already in place. This is automatically successful and requires no die rolls.

You may use this technique to place a card next to another system even though one or both has no link cable there. If you do this, line up the new card next to the old one, just as though it had a regular link there. See Figure 5 (above).

You may also use this to make an "illegal" card placement legal, as in Figure 6 (below). Without a bridge, card C could not be played there if card A were already in place (or vice versa) because they touch at the corners. A bridge makes it legal.

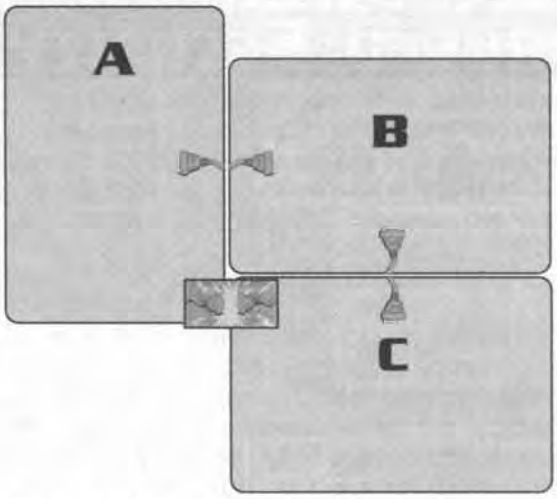


Figure 6: Using a bridge to make touching cards legal.

Bridges Between Existing Systems

You may also spend a hack to add a bridge between two existing systems.

Figure 7 (below) is an example of this kind of bridge. The bridge connects Systems B and C. Both of them are legally placed without the bridge, but the bridge connects them directly.

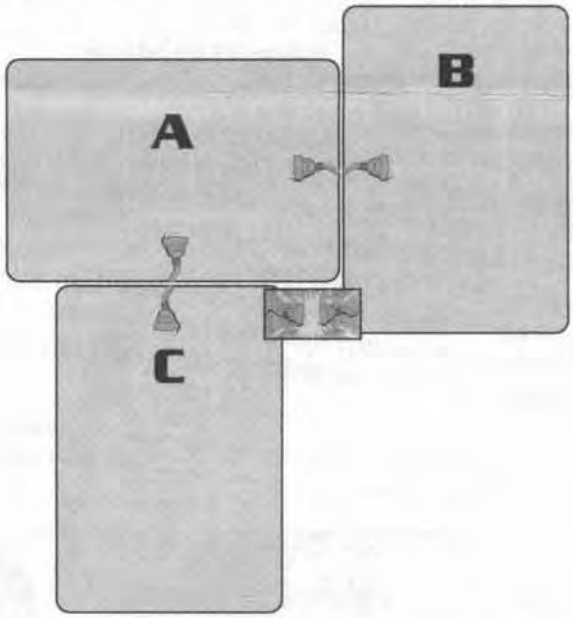


Figure 7: Adding a bridge between two legal systems.

To add a bridge between two existing systems, you must spend a hack. A die-roll is required for success. If the roll fails, you can use another hack, then or later, and try again (there or elsewhere). Roll as follows:

If you have root on both systems: 11 or less.
If you have root on one system: 10 or less.
If you have regular accounts on both systems: 9 or less.
If you have a regular account on one system: 8 or less.
If you have no accounts on either system: 6 or less.

Improved Security

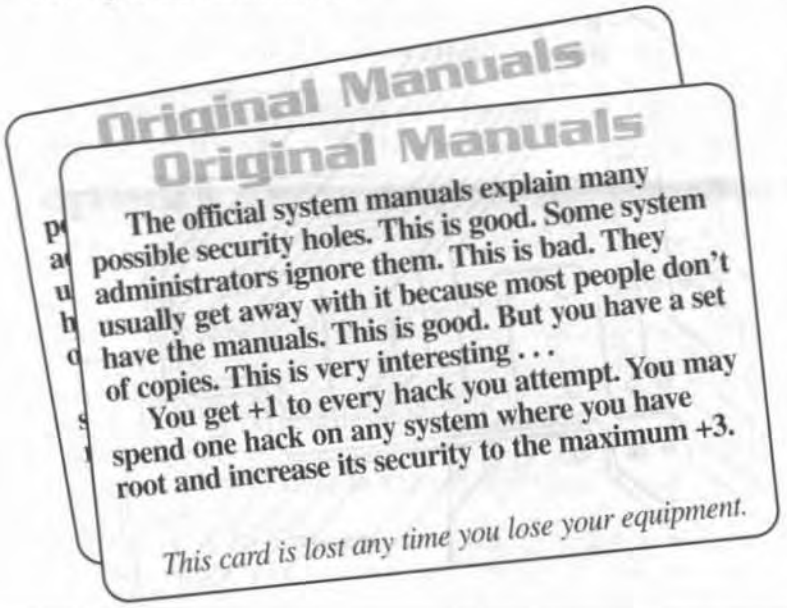
A hacker can, if he chooses, *improve* the security of a system. The basic rules allow a hacker to clean house if he wants to. But if a hacker works at it, he can do other things the sysadmin *should* do . . . like patch security holes, monitor usage patterns, or even replace bad password-checking programs with better versions.

To improve a system's security, a hacker must have root access there.

The better a system's security is, the harder it is to improve it further. Each attempt to improve security requires one hack, rolling against the system's current security level *without any bonuses*. A successful roll means security is improved by 1: put a Security +1 chip on the system. A failure has no effect, except for a natural roll of 2, which hits ICE if any is present!

A hacker can improve security on a system by a maximum of 3, and each improvement requires a separate attempt. However, if a Black ICE chip adds +1 or +2 to a system's security, hackers may improve this new total by 3. It would be possible for a system to end the game with security 5 higher than that printed on the card . . . 2 from Black ICE and 3 from helpful hackers.

A hacker who has an **Original Manuals** card may spend one hack on a system where he has root, and *automatically* improve security to the maximum +3.



A Hacker Glossary

Access: If you have an account on a system, you have "access." There are two kinds of access: regular and root. If you have current access, you have an account and you can trace a path to it.

Account: The privilege of using a certain computer – represented in the game by a colored "account chip."

Crack: To crack a system is to gain access to it.

Hacker: (1) A skilled and dedicated programmer. (2) A computer intruder or other techno-crook. Sense (1) is the original meaning; sense (2) is the one popularized by the media. Of course, some people are hackers in both senses.

Indial: A system which is connected to the outside world by telephone. Indials are most vulnerable to hacking attempts. In the game, an indial is represented by a dark blue card with a phone symbol, or by any system when a player has placed an Indial Chip.

ICE: Intrusion Countermeasure Electronics. System software that traps and identifies hackers. (In the real world, ICE doesn't exist yet . . . at least, not the way Tom Maddox invented it and William Gibson made it famous in *Neuromancer*. But someday it will. In the meantime, an alert and vengeful system administrator can serve the same function . . . see Cliff Stoll's *The Cuckoo's Egg*.

Net: (1) A specific network of connected systems, like MilNet in this game. (2) All the interconnected computer systems in the world. This is The Net, as opposed to "a net."

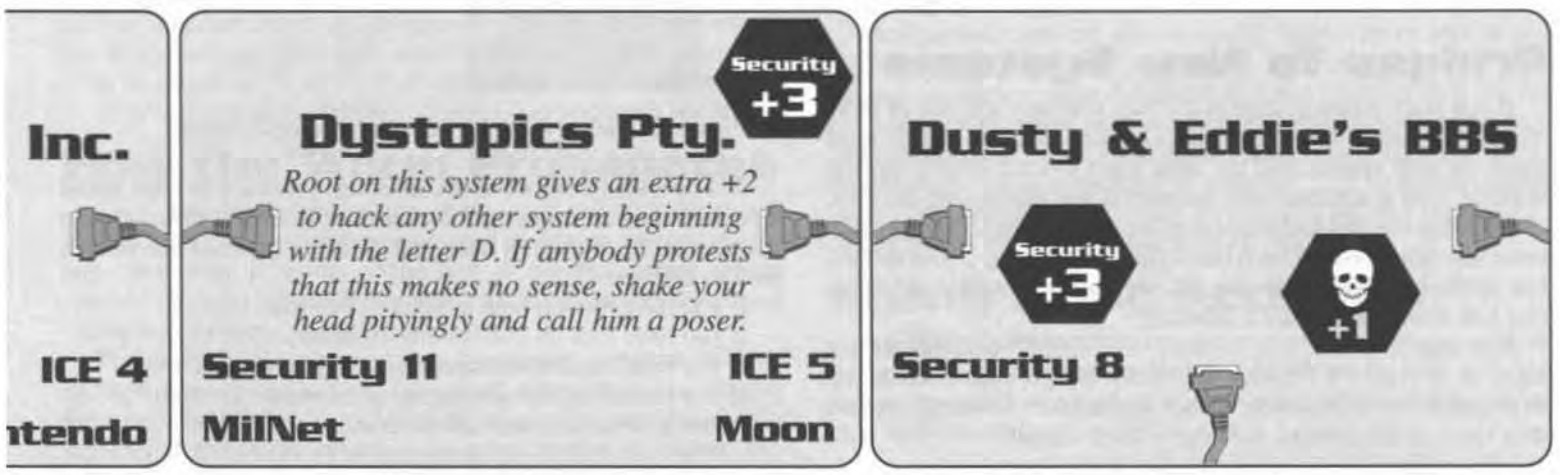
Path: A chain of systems from an indial when you have an account to the target system. Unless a system is an indial, you must be able to trace a path to a system in order to hack it. Even if you have an account on a system, you must still be able to trace a path to that system in order to use it.

Poser: Someone who pretends to be a hacker, and isn't. This is a good thing to call somebody who just blew an easy roll.

Promote: To promote yourself is to improve your access on a system. To promote a friend is to help him improve his access.

Root: The root account on the system is the most privileged account. Root is the Holy Grail of hacking. With root access, you can see everything and do anything.

Social Engineering: The process of talking your way onto systems. "Pardon me, sir. I'm from Vermin, checking out your server. Tell me your password, please." Also, the process of getting other hackers to help you.





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Charts and Tables

HOUSECLEANING

When does a system clean house? Roll 1 die:

3 hackers present (3-player game only) – on a roll of 1.
4 hackers present – on a roll of 1.
5 hackers present – on a roll of 1 or 2.
6 hackers present – on a roll of 1, 2 or 3.

When a system cleans house, each hacker with an account there must roll to see if he loses his account. Roll 1 die if you have regular access, 2 dice if you have root. The account is lost on a roll of 4 or less for a regular housecleaning, 5 or less if a hacker is cleaning house.

HACKING RESULTS

All these results are based on the hacker's modified die roll, except where noted.

ICE number or less: Hit ICE! See p. 5. (A natural 2 always hits ICE, regardless of the hacker's bonuses, unless he has an Icebreaker.)

Security number or greater: Achieved regular access.

Security number +4 or greater: Achieved root access!

Natural (not modified) 12: It was easy, dude! The hacker got in on his first try. It doesn't count against his total number of hack attempts for the turn!

BONUSES TO HACK

All bonuses are cumulative. System upgrades and special cards can also add bonuses.

If you just added the system to the net: +1
Net Ninja: +1
Same System Type (root access only): +1, once per hack
Same Net Type (root access only): +1, once per hack
Adjacent Root Access: +1 for each adjacent root
Promoting Regular Access to Root: +1
Same Root Access: +2, once per hack (this cannot be added to bonuses for system type, net type or promotion).

Our thanks to the Electronic Frontier Foundation for their help in the Secret Service case. If not for the EFF, the Feds would have gotten away with everything they did. Instead, they were reprimanded and had to pay damages . . . we got our equipment back . . . and a precedent was set that still protects others.



"Protecting rights and promoting freedom on the electronic frontier."

www.eff.org

Frequently Asked Questions About *HACKER*

Does an account on a hub count as "adjacent" when trying to hack into, or nark on, a system of a similar network type? Yes, it does.

Can you deliberately trigger ICE? Yes, just by hacking a system and saying "I'm triggering the ICE." And sometimes it's a good strategy.

When playing ***Hacker Lite***, *do you lose all of your equipment when a raid card is played on you, or just your modem?* You only lose your modem.

Can you use more than one set of allies at a time? Yes.

Can you nark on any Indial? Yes. Since you call from your home system, you are already adjacent to it.

Do crashed systems roll for housecleaning? No.

Can the NCIC's special ability return someone to the game if they've already gotten three busts? No. Good try, but no.

If I play a Congressional Investigation card to cancel a raid, do I get to keep the account on the system I was hacking into when I was raided? No.




ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
Security +3
Security +3
Security +2
Security +2
Security +1
Security +1
Security +1
Security +1


CRASHED
Known Indial
Back Door
Secret Indial
Never Cleans House


ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
ICE
Security +3
Security +3
Security +2
Security +2
Security +1
Security +1
Security +1
Security +1


CRASHED
Known Indial
Back Door
Secret Indial
Never Cleans House


+2
+1
ICE
ICE
ICE
Security
+3
Security
+3
ICE
Security
+2
Security
+2
ICE
Security
+1
Security
+1
ICE
Security
+1
Security
+1
ICE


CRASHED
CRASHED
CRASHED
Known
Indial
CRASHED
CRASHED
CRASHED
Back
Door
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Known
Indial
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Back
Door
Back
Door
Secret
Indial
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Indial
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Indial
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Indial
Back
Door
Back
Door
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Never
Cleans
House
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Back
Door


+2
+1
ICE
ICE
ICE
Security
+3
Security
+3
ICE
Security
+2
Security
+2
ICE
Security
+1
Security
+1
ICE
Security
+1
Security
+1
ICE


CRASHED
CRASHED
CRASHED
Known
Indial
CRASHED
CRASHED
CRASHED
Back
Door
Secret
Indial
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Indial
Back
Door
Back
Door
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Never
Cleans
House
Secret
Indial
Secret
Indial
Back
Door

Using scissors or an art knife, hack out the consoles, system upgrades, viruses, etc. Fold each console along the score line so it will stand up.

HACKER

Standard Modem
No Bonus

Plain Clone
2 hacks per turn

Empty

Modem
System
Expansion

Icebreaker
Reduces all ICE levels by 3
Must trade in a RAM card or Sequencer

Military Icebreaker
MILITARY UPGRADE
Ignore all ICE totally!

Sequencer
1 extra hack each turn
Must trade in a RAM card or Icebreaker

RAM Card
+1 to all hacks

MONA LISA

HACKER
Standard Modem
No Bonus
Plain Clone
2 hacks per turn
Empty
Modem
System
Expansion
BEELZEBUB
MONA LISA
RAM Card
+1 to all hacks
Yodel Modem
+1 to all hacks
Screamer Modem
+2 to all hacks
Must trade in a Yodel Modem
Banshee Modem
+3 to all hacks
MILITARY UPGRADE

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

HACKED

Diverse Standards, Inc.



Security 7

Moon

Two System Upgrades

This card may be exchanged at any time for two upgrades – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

You may also use this card to jump directly to an upgrade without the required trade-in. For instance, if you have no modem at all, you could go directly to a Screamer. This would count as two upgrades.

Whoops

They dropped your system as they were taking it out the door. No evidence, no bust. (No good if you were caught online, though.)

Play this card when you are raided. You still lose your equipment.

Enormous State University



Security 10

ICE 5

Bacchus

Trashing

Somebody was too cheap to buy a shredder. Help them out. Hold a paper drive!

You get a +3 on one attempt to hack. If that attempt fails, the +3 can be re-used, *that turn only*, on other hack attempts on the same target.

Uncrash

Play this card at any time. Any crashed system – your choice – comes back online immediately.

Consolidated Amalgamated



Security 12

ICE 6

HAL

Dynababble



Security 8

Uncrash

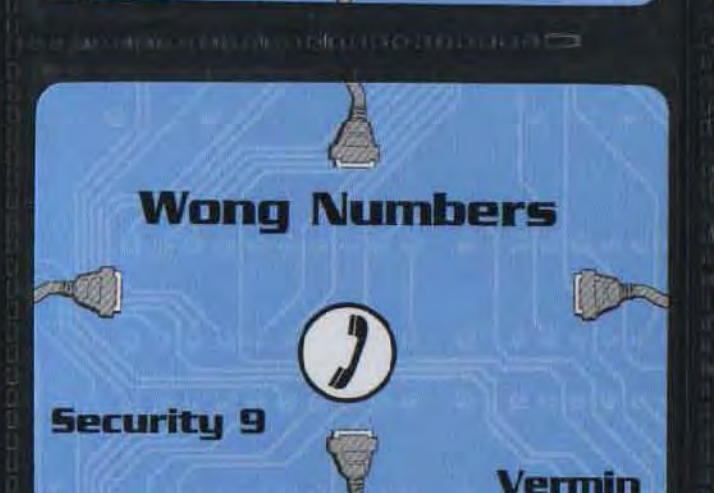
Play this card at any time. Any crashed system – your choice – comes back online immediately.

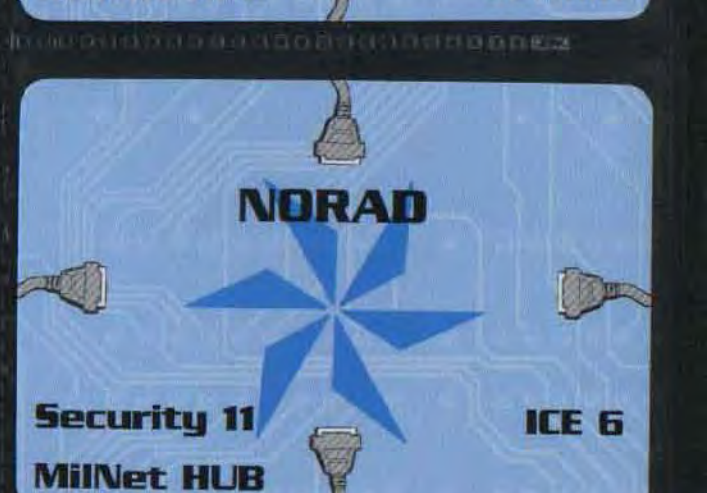

Matrix GmbH
Security 9
ICE 4
Moon


Teleclone
Security 10
ICE 4
ComNet
HAL


Malefactors
Handover Bank
Security 11
ICE 6
BizNet HUB
Vermin


Greedcomm
Security 9
Yentendo


Wong Numbers
Security 9
Vermin


NORAD
Security 11
ICE 6
MilNet HUB


SquishySoft
Security 8
ICE 3
Vermin


HAL, Inc.
If you have root on this system, you get an extra +1 bonus against any HAL computer.
Security 11
ICE 6
BizNet HUB
HAL


Pentagon
Security 12
ICE 6
MilNet HUB
HAL

Blivitron

Security 10 — ICE 3

BizNet

Bell & Whistle

Security 10 — ICE 5

ComNet — Bacchus

Phiber Optikon

Security 11 — ICE 5

ComNet HUB

Coast Guard

Security 8 — ICE 2

MilNet

Able Cable

Security 8 — ICE 3

ComNet — Yentendo

Telcotronix

Security 11 — ICE 5

ComNet HUB — Vermin

ComSecMilNavPac

Security 9 — ICE 4

MilNet — HAL

Catatonix

Security 8 — ICE 2

Bacchus

Association of Security Sysadmins

If you have root on this system, you can nark on any system, anywhere in the net.

Security 10 — ICE 2

HAL

Defense Investigation Agency

Security 11
MilNet

ICE 5
Moon

Extropy Enterprises

Security 10
BizNet

ICE 3
Yentendo

General Iatrogenics

Security 10

ICE 4
HAL

Defense Space Agency

Security 9
MilNet

FOO-BAR

Security 7
BizNet

I.R.S.

Tax Refund! If you have root on this system, you can have a free system upgrade whenever you like – but only once per game.

Security 13

ICE 7
Vermin

Dogmatix

Security 8

ICE 3
Vermin

Fruitbat Technologies

Security 8

HAL

Intercrunch

Security 7
ComNet

Yentendo

N.C.I.C.

National Crime Information Center. If you have root on this system, you can spend one hack to automatically remove one bust from any record. You may do this any number of times, but only once per turn.

Security 14 **ICE 8**

NASA

Security 9 **ICE 3**

Bacchus

Kanyu Digital

Security 10 **ICE 5**

ComNet

No Such Agency

If you have root on this system, you may draw an extra card at the end of your turn, unless you trade your turn for a system upgrade.

Security 12 **ICE 7**

Moon

Net Prophet, Ltd.

Security 10 **ICE 4**

ComNet

Mentor Microcode

Security 10 **ICE 4**

BizNet **Yentendo**

OmniLink

If you have root on this system, you get one extra hack per turn.

Security 11 **ICE 2**

Bacchus

Newsleak Magazine

Security 9

Moon

Mondo Institute of Technology

If you have root on this system, all ICE scores are reduced by 1 for you. This knowledge cannot be effectively shared.

Security 8

Bacchus

Omniscient Credit Inc.

If you have root on this system, you get +1 on any hack attempt anywhere.

Security 9

ICE 4

Superfluous Software

Security 9

HAL

WysiWizards

Security 8

Yentendo

Specific Statics Inc.

Security 9

ICE 4

BizNet

Bacchus

United Vaporware

Security 9

ICE 2

Yentendo

Veterans Administration

Security 8

ICE 2

MilNet

Bacchus

Sterling Chrome Ltd.

Security 11

ICE 6

HAL

Univacuum

Security 7

Yentendo

Valdez Oil Transport Co.

Security 10

ICE 4

BizNet

Caught Online

You were caught in the act . . . you were hacking when they came in the door. You're busted automatically, with no hope of escape.

Play this card on a rival who has just been raided. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.

Back Door

There's a legend that programmers always leave themselves a secret way into the systems they write. Sometimes it's true.

This card may be used on one hack. It gets you automatic, *permanent* root on one system. Unless the system is totally removed from the net, you cannot lose your account, no matter what happens. Put your Back Door chip on the system along with your root access chip.



Warehouse 666



Security 10 **ICE 5**



MilNet **Moon**

Caffeine and Pizza

Perfect for that manic burst of energy.

You get one extra hack (one turn only). Save this card until needed.

Back Door

There's a legend that programmers always leave themselves a secret way into the systems they write. Sometimes it's true.

This card may be used on one hack. It gets you automatic, *permanent* root on one system. Unless the system is totally removed from the net, you cannot lose your account, no matter what happens. Put your Back Door chip on the system along with your root access chip.

Allies

There are no laws against hacking in Holland, and you've contacted a perfectly legal group of Dutch hobbyists who share your interests . . .

1 extra hack per turn.

Caffeine and Pizza

Perfect for that manic burst of energy.

You get one extra hack (one turn only). Save this card until needed.

Bad Karma

The raiders didn't find evidence at your home, so they raided your job, your school, your friends . . .

Lose your next turn.

Play this card on a rival who was just raided but not busted. If you don't want to harass anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.

Allies

Rumors of your exploits have impressed the TeleWizards Intrusion Team, who hang out on an underground BBS. Now you have a tribe of TWITs to help you hack.

1 extra hack per turn.

Combined Operation

Bad news. Several law enforcement agencies were cooperating on this raid. Subtract 2 from your roll to avoid a bust.

Play on an opponent who has just been raided. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.

Dummy Equipment

The investigators took your TV and your old Banana II, but they overlooked the real stuff. No evidence, no bust – and you keep your system. (If you were caught online, this card won't help you.)

Play this card when you're raided.

Early Warning

You got word that you were being investigated. Did you have time to clean up your act?

Play this card when you're raided. It lets you add 2 to your roll to avoid a bust.

Congressional Inquiry

It turns out that the raiders didn't have a valid search warrant. You get all your equipment back, and you won't be busted.

Use this card when you're raided. This card nullifies any "raid" card ***and*** *any card that makes a raid worse.*

Disk Crash

Your hard disk crashed. Of course, there was no backup. Bad news, dude!

Play on a rival at any time. He loses all his face-down special cards.

FBI Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 9 or better to avoid a bust.

Play on a rival after any successful hack by ***any*** *player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Congressional Inquiry

It turns out that the raiders didn't have a valid search warrant. You get all your equipment back, and you won't be busted.

Use this card when you're raided. This card nullifies any "raid" card ***and*** *any card that makes a raid worse.*

Defense Intelligence Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 8 or better to avoid a bust.

Play on a rival after any successful hack by ***any*** *player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Funding Cut

Mightier than a hundred hackers is the stroke of the accountant's pen. In an instant, a thriving system goes to digital doom.

Random economic problems bankrupt a company or close down a military base. Playing this card CRASHES any MilNet system, or any net hub. It REMOVES any other system permanently. Another system can be played later to fill the gap, as long as it fits legally.

Hacker Hysteria

A sensationalistic TV show has increased the paranoia level among system administrators. Roll a die for every system. On a 1, 2 or 3, that system cleans house immediately, and each player must roll (as per Housecleaning) to keep his account.

Hidden Indial

You find a system's secret incoming phone line. Place your Indial Chip on the system of your choice. You may now treat that system as an indial. (This does not count as a hack.)

You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

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You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

Get A Life

A new computer game ate your brain. 100 hours later, you beat it, and you're ready to get back to hacking. But you get only one hack this turn. You may not skip your turn for a system upgrade.

Play on a rival at the beginning of his turn.

Hidden Indial

You find a system's secret incoming phone line. Place your Indial Chip on the system of your choice. You may now treat that system as an indial. (This does not count as a hack.)

You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

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You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

Get A Life

You met an interesting member of the opposite sex, and briefly entertained the delusion that there was more to life than hacking. You get only one hack this turn. You may not skip your turn for a system upgrade.

Play on a rival at the beginning of his turn.

Hidden Indial

You find a system's secret incoming phone line. Place your Indial Chip on the system of your choice. You may now treat that system as an indial. (This does not count as a hack.)

You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

Hired By Telco

You get a job at the phone company! You get +2 to all hacks, but if you're raided, you lose this card *and* subtract 1 from your roll to avoid the bust, And if you *are* busted while you're a telco employee, the bust counts double.

Save this card until you want to reveal it. You may discard it at any time ***before*** *you're raided, even if it's face-up.*

ICE Skating

You knew this hack would be dangerous, so you took a few extra precautions. That's all that saved you from a trap.

Play this card when you trigger ICE. You escape automatically. Usable once only.

Original Manuals

The official system manuals explain many possible security holes. This is good. Some system administrators ignore them. This is bad. They usually get away with it because most people don't have the manuals. This is good. But you have a set of copies. This is very interesting . . .

You get +1 to every hack you attempt. You may spend one hack on any system where you have root and increase its security to the maximum +3.

This card is lost any time you lose your equipment.

Password File

You have acquired a decrypted password file. Using this card is a hack and gives you automatic *regular* access on any one system.

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Play this card when you trigger ICE. You escape automatically. Usable once only.

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This card is lost any time you lose your equipment.

Password File

You have acquired a decrypted password file. Using this card is a hack and gives you automatic *regular* access on any one system.

Local Police Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 6 or better to avoid a bust.

*Play on a rival after any successful hack by **any** player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Local Police Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 6 or better to avoid a bust.

*Play on a rival after any successful hack by **any** player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Peek

You hacked your rival's BBS and looked at his files. Seems fair . . .

You may look – once only – at all the face-down special cards held by an opponent of your choice.

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You may look – once only – at all the face-down special cards held by an opponent of your choice.

Self-Destruct

Somehow your whole system accidentally melted down. No evidence, no bust. (No good if you were caught online, though.)

Play this card when you are raided. You still lose your system.

Social Engineering

"Pardon me. I'm with the phone company and we're checking out a problem with your modem line. What's the root password on your system, please?"

You get +4 on one attempt to hack. If that attempt fails, the +4 can be re-used, *that turn only*, on other hack attempts on the same target.

Reply Hazy, Hack Again Later

Too bad! Line noise knocked you off just as you were getting somewhere. Your attempted intrusion was a failure.

Play this card on any rival after a successful intrusion. It cannot be used if a special card was used for the hack.

Secret Service Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 7 or better to avoid a bust.

*Play on a rival after any successful hack by **any** player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Social Engineering

"This is Joe Jones. My password didn't work. Can you reset it to JOE for me?"

You get +4 on one attempt to hack. If that attempt fails, the +4 can be re-used, *that turn only*, on other hack attempts on the same target.

Root Set to Default

You found a system where the administrator had never changed the root password – it's still got the factory setting. Playing this card with an access attempt gives you automatic *root* access on any one system.

Secret Service Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 7 or better to avoid a bust.

*Play on a rival after any successful hack by **any** player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

System Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for an upgrade – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

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This card may be exchanged at any time for an upgrade – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

Surge Protector Fails!

A lightning strike came down the wires and fried your system. Lose any one system upgrade – your choice – from your console.

Play this card on a rival at any time.

System Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for an upgrade – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

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A lightning strike came down the wires and fried your system. Lose any one system upgrade – your choice – from your console.

Play this card on a rival at any time.

Traffic Analysis File

You can clean house, with automatic success, on any one system where you have root. This must be done on your turn but does not count as a hack. You can remove anyone or everyone from the system. Usable only once.

Beelzebub Virus

You have created a virus, which you can pass to someone else. From then on, anybody can catch it, including you, if they accept a favor from someone who is infected. To find out what Beelzebub does to its unlucky victims, see the Virus Table in the rulebook.

Play this card on a rival when you do them a favor, forced or otherwise. They get the virus.

Congressional Inquiry

It turns out that the raiders didn't have a valid search warrant. You get all your equipment back, and you won't be busted.

Use this card when you're raided. This card nullifies any "raid" card ***and*** *any card that makes a raid worse.*

Trashing

Somebody threw away an old backup disk. Bad idea. You can leave them e-mail about it . . . from their own account.

You get a +3 on one attempt to hack. If that attempt fails, the +3 can be re-used, *that turn only*, on other hack attempts on the same target.

Back Door

There's a legend that programmers always leave themselves a secret way into the systems they write. Sometimes it's true.

This card may be used on one hack. It gets you automatic, *permanent* root on one system. Unless the system is totally removed from the net, you cannot lose your account, no matter what happens. Put your Back Door chip on the system along with your root access chip.

Dad's A Lawyer

You do not lose your equipment when you're raided – only on a genuine bust.

Play this card at any time and keep it in front of you for the rest of the game. Nothing can take it away from you, and it cannot be traded.

Allies

You meet a few new friends on the net. They're *otaku* – Japanese information freaks. It's amazing what these guys can find out, in exchange for what *you* can find out . . .

Gives one extra hack per turn.

Anarcho-Tech Marauder

You cracked the local ATM codes. Nobody, not even you, is crazy enough to do this more than once. But once is good for three system upgrades.

If you have root on two BizNet systems, you may exchange this card at any time for any three upgrades from those still available, or for one military upgrade. You may jump directly to an upgrade without the required trade-in, counting that as two or three upgrades as appropriate.

Disinfectant

You know all those guys who say they experiment with viruses "for study purposes only"? One of them was telling the truth.

Place this card in front of you at any time to be immune to one virus (declared when the card is placed). Alternately, place this card in front of you when handed the Virus card. You keep the Virus card and may use it later, ***and*** *you become immune to that virus. Alternately, play this card at any time, as long as it hasn't yet been used against viruses, to totally eliminate the Worm from the network.*

Divine Meditation

Your computer fails you. It becomes one with the universe. You become one with the repair manual. Your turn ends immediately.

Play this card on a rival at any time during his turn.

Gooey Interface

You dropped the pizza on your keyboard. The pepperoni wasn't so bad, but the cheese seems to have slowed down your typing speed. You get only one hack this turn.

Play on a rival at the beginning of his turn.

Hidden Indial

You find a system's secret incoming phone line. Place your Indial Chip on the system of your choice. You may now treat that system as an indial. (This does not count as a hack.)

You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

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Get A Clue

You dialed a local BBS by accident, and spent hours trying to hack it. Lose all but one hack this turn.

Play on a rival at the beginning of his turn.

Hack the Hacker

The easiest target on that new system was . . . your rival's clandestine account. So you hacked *that*, and found out all kinds of things he probably wouldn't have told you.

Play at any time during your turn to demand a favor. However, because you actually deduced this information rather than being sent it on purpose, you can't catch a virus from this favor.

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*Place this card in front of you at any time to be immune to one virus (declared when the card is placed). Alternately, place this card in front of you when handed the Virus card. You keep the Virus card and may use it later, **and** you become immune to that virus. Alternately, play this card at any time, as long as it hasn't yet been used against viruses, to totally eliminate the Worm from the network.*

Fuschia Box

You built an unofficial phone-system peripheral from a set of instructions you found in the back of *Phiend Magazine*. You have no idea what it does, but it seems to do it very well.

Gives +1 to all hacks.

Hack the Hacker

The easiest target on that new system was . . . your rival's clandestine account. So you hacked *that*, and found out all kinds of things he probably wouldn't have told you.

Play at any time during your turn to demand a favor. However, because you actually deduced this information rather than being sent it on purpose, you can't catch a virus from this favor.

Idiot Sysadmin

The administrator of this system doesn't believe in hackers. He never cleans house. Never.

Place the "Never Cleans House" chip on this system. It is only lost if the system crashes. (If that happens, the idiot is out of work and will be replaced by someone with a clue.)

Mauve Box

Multiplexes your outgoing calls to give you an extra (free) virtual phone line. Reach out and hack someone . . .

Gives 1 extra hack per turn.

Mona Lisa Virus

You have created a virus, which you can pass to someone else. From then on, anybody can catch it, including you, if they accept a favor from someone who is infected. To find out what Mona Lisa does to its unlucky victims, see the Virus Table in the rulebook.

Play this card on a rival when you do him a favor, forced or otherwise. They get the virus.

ICE Skating

You knew this hack would be dangerous, so you took a few extra precautions. That's all that saved you from a trap.

Play this card when you trigger ICE. You escape automatically. Usable once only.

Local Police Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 6 or better to avoid a bust.

*Play on a rival after any successful hack by **any** player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

Military Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for any military upgrade from those still available. You must trade in whatever upgrade is currently in the equivalent slot.

Alternatively, this card may be used for *two* regular upgrades, or to jump directly to an upgrade without the required trade-in. For instance, if you have no modem at all, you could go directly to a Screamer. This would count as two upgrades.

Hidden Indial

You find a system's secret incoming phone line. Place your Indial Chip on the system of your choice. You may now treat that system as an indial. (This does not count as a hack.)

You may tell others the number if you like. If you do, they place their Indial Chip(s) there too.

Indial Busy

The number you are dialing is busy. All the time. You may not use this indial any time this turn.

Play on a rival at any time during his turn.

Military Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for any military upgrade from those still available. You must trade in whatever upgrade is currently in the equivalent slot.

Alternatively, this card may be used for *two* regular upgrades, or to jump directly to an upgrade without the required trade-in. For instance, if you have no modem at all, you could go directly to a Screamer. This would count as two upgrades.

Wardialer

**Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.
Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.
Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.
Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.
Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.
Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring. Ring.**

You may now gain access to every Hidden Indial already in play. Place one of your Indial Chips on each system that already has one.

Slightly Off-White Box

Allows you to insert undocumented dialing codes in your outgoing calls.

Gives +2 to all hacks.

Federal agents believe that the very existence of the Off-White Box is a threat to national security. If you have this box in your possession when raided, subtract 1 from your chance to avoid a bust.

Reconfiguration

The net.gods have decreed a change in topology. Move any system from where it is to wherever you want it . . . as long as only one connection changes. Thus, everything on the "other side" of the changed connection must move, too.

Play at the beginning of any turn.

Taiwanese Modem

You thought you got a good deal . . . but last night it made a really diagnostic sort of noise, and all the magic smoke got out.

Lose your modem.

Play on a rival at any time.

Sysadmin On Vacation

Sure, the system needs to clean house. But the administrator is out of town, and everybody else is afraid to touch the keyboard. So the housecleaning does not occur.

Play whenever a system is about to clean house. Roll a die; on a 1, 2, or 3, this card is not lost, but may be played again. Sysadmins take ***long*** *vacations.*

Secret Service Raid

Lose all your equipment. Roll 7 or better to avoid a bust.

Play on a rival after any successful hack by ***any*** *player. If you don't want to bust anybody, you can turn in this card and demand a favor instead.*

System Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for an upgrade – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

System Upgrade

This card may be exchanged at any time for an upgrade – your choice – from those still available. Some upgrades require trade-ins.

Self-Destruct

Somehow your whole system accidentally melted down. No evidence, no bust. (No good if you were caught online, though.)

Play this card when you are raided. You still lose your system.

Dissociated Press



Security 10

ComNet

Zaibatsu Motors & Electronics



Security 12

BizNet

ICE 6

Yentendo

Dewey, Cheatham & Howe Investments

They're already under investigation, so having an account here increases the chance of getting busted.
-1 penalty to avoid a bust.

Security 7

BizNet

Prudegy



Security 10

ICE 3

Moon

Godel, Escher & Bach

The first time you get root on this system, you can draw two extra cards. Only once per game!



Security 12

HAL

Buddy's House of Electronics

Housecleans every turn, no matter how many hackers are there.

Security 8

Vermin

The Worm

You have loosed the Worm on the Net. Automatically infects target system, which instantly tries to infect each adjacent system. As the creator of the Worm, you get a +1 to hack any wormy system, for as long as the Worm lasts and you keep this card in front of you. But until you get rid of this card, you are at -1 to avoid any bust.

Play this card during your turn, on any system where you have current access or any adjacent system. Counts as a hack.

Ed's Budget Outdial and Bait Shop

This system never housecleans.



Security 7

British Broadcasting Catastrophe

Security 9

ComNet

Bacchus

Dusty & Eddie's BBS

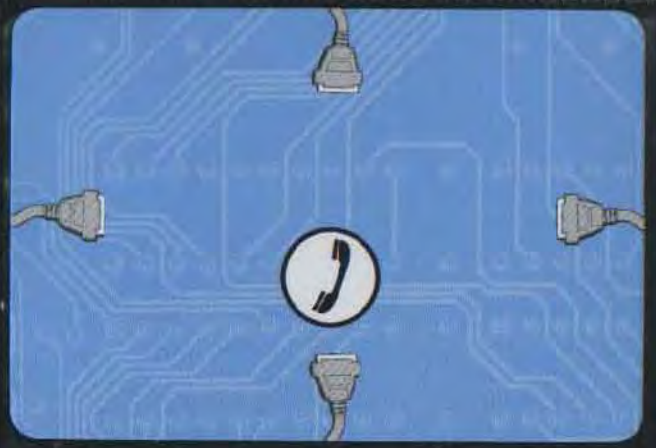
Security 8

Multiverse

A famous ex-hacker runs security here, so cracking this system carries great prestige. Root access counts double for victory conditions. But anyone who hacks an account here must lose time looking for the (entirely mythical) Database of Doom, and gets only one hack next turn.

Security 11 **ICE 4**

Bacchus



Dystopics Pty.

Root on this system gives an extra +2 to hack any other system beginning with the letter D. If anybody protests that this makes no sense, shake your head pityingly and call him a poser.

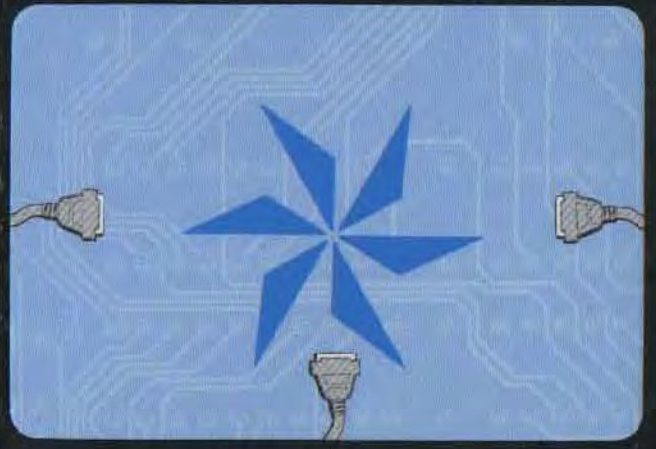
Security 11 **ICE 5**

MilNet **Moon**

KremVAX

Security 10 **ICE 6**

Yentendo



Federal Bureau of Illumination

*If you have root on this system at the **beginning** of your turn, you may look at all the special cards held by any **one** of your rivals.*

Security 13 **ICE 6**

MilNet **HAL**

Gene Wranglers Limited

Security 9

HAL

WARP Radio

This system never housecleans.

Security 8

Vermin



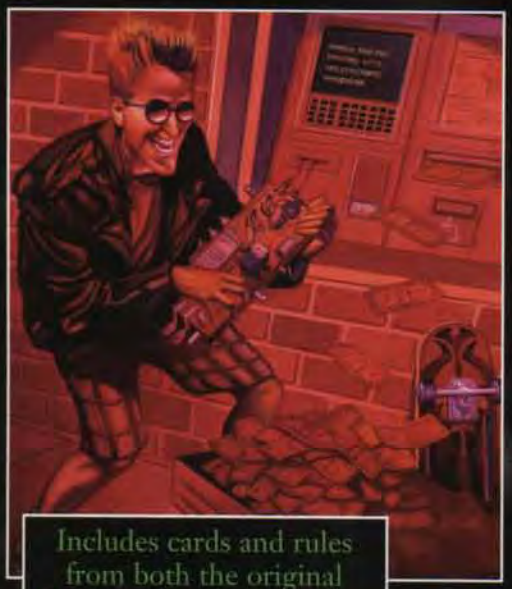
YOU ARE THE NET NINJA!

Surf through the net, invading one system after the next. Find back doors and secret phone lines . . . crash the systems your rivals are using . . . and beware of the Secret Service raid. Three busts and you're out of the game . . .

Hacker won the Origins Award for Best Modern-Day Boardgame of 1992. Then the *Dark Side* supplement won the same award for 1993.

In 1990, the Secret Service went on a "hacker hunt" . . . right through the Steve Jackson Games office. The agents took computers, printers, hard drives, at least one pocket calculator, over 300 floppy disks, and the whole Illuminati BBS.

In 1992, we made a game out of it. ***Hacker*** satirized the Secret Service, the hackers, the phone company, and (almost) the whole Net.



Includes cards and rules from both the original *Hacker* and the supplement *Hacker II: The Dark Side*.

"Now here's a real 'cyberpunk' game!" said *Dragon*.

Mondo 2000 said, "Hacker is a wonderful, funny, Jolt-and-pizza game, which should have you wallowing in paranoia, greed, and hardcore, upgrade-or-die technophilia. What else is life about?"

(In 1993, with the help of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, we won our lawsuit against the Secret Service. See **www.sjgames.com/SS/** for the whole story.)

Now you can be the kind of hacker the Secret Service thought WE were. For 2 to 6 players: complete rules, 165 cards, and massive quantities of counters and other cardboard bits representing consoles, upgrades, virus infections, and the coveted title of Net Ninja!

Game design by Steve Jackson
Cover art by Jeffrey K. Starling

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